

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

Claims 1-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method for ~~treating hepatitis C virus (HCV)~~ decreasing the alanine aminotransferase (ALT) blood level in a human subject, comprising

orally administering interferon-tau to the subject at a daily dosage between ~~2 x 10<sup>8</sup> – 10<sup>10</sup> Units~~, said dosage effective to ~~decrease stimulate~~ bloodstream levels of ~~2'-5' oligoadenylate synthetase ALT~~ relative to bloodstream levels of ~~2'-5' oligoadenylate synthetase ALT~~ prior to treatment, and

~~continuing to orally administer interferon-tau to the subject in such effective amount until improvement of the subject's condition is observed.~~

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein said orally administering comprises orally administering interferon-tau formulated to avoid absorption through the *tunica mucosa oris*.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said orally administering comprises orally administering interferon-tau contained in an oral-delivery vehicle effective to release the interferon-tau in active form in the digestive tract.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein said orally administering comprises orally administering interferon-tau contained in an oral-delivery vehicle effective to release interferon-tau in the stomach or intestines.

22. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein said orally administering comprises orally administering interferon-tau at a dose ~~between 10<sup>8</sup>—10<sup>10</sup>~~ greater than 4 x 10<sup>8</sup> Units per day.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, further comprising administering a second anti-viral agent to the subject.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising measuring the blood level of ~~2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase ALT~~ in the subject prior to orally administering interferon-tau.

25. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising measuring the blood level of ~~2', 5'-oligoadenylate synthetase ALT~~ in the subject after orally administering interferon-tau.

26. (Currently amended) The method of claim 25, further comprising adjusting the dose of interferon-tau and continuing to administer at said adjusted dose.